**Curbing the use of pesticides**

5402. SHRI C.O. POULOSE: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) Whether it is a fact that use of pesticides has gone up by several times in the last few decades;

(b) whether Government have any information about the excessive use of pesticides in agriculture and allied production, food and food products; and

(c) if so, the details of steps taken by Government to curb the unhealthy practice?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI HUKUMDEO NARAYAN YADAV): (a) to (c) Sir, though the consumption of pesticides increased from 54,775 Metric Tonne (Technical Grade) during 1980-81 to 75,033 Metric Tonne (Technical Grade) during 1990-1991, it considerably decreased to 43,584 Metric Tonne (Technical Grade) during 2000-2001.

Excessive use of pesticides in stray cases can take place because of ignorance of farmers. However, efforts are made for safe and judicious us of pesticides. If the pesticides are used as per the prescribed directions, they do not pose any harm to human beings, animals and the environment. The Government is promoting Integrated Pest Management (IPM) approach which *inter alia* comprises of cultural, mechanical and biological control in order to reduce the use of chemical pesticides in agriculture and allied sectors.

In addition, following steps are taken by the Government to reduce excessive use of chemical pesticides in agriculture;

(i) Training of farmers and extension officers through organization of Farmers' Field Schools;

(ii) Establishement of State Biocontrol Laboratories for mass production of biocontrol agents and their field releases;

(iii) Promotion of biopesticides like nuclear polyhedrosis virus, Bacillus thuringiensis and neem based biopesticides.